Bangladesh

1 - 30 November 2019

805,673 persons have now **received identity documents** under the Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR Joint Registration process. The main part of the process is due to finish soon.

UNHCR launched a **cash distribution for vulnerable families in the host community** in Teknaf, Cox's Bazar, as part of the agency's continued commitment to support local areas hosting refugees.

Cyclone Bulbul hit Bangladesh on 9/10 November affecting coastal areas in the northwest, but it had limited impact on the refugee settlements in Cox's Bazar, except for heavy rain and winds.
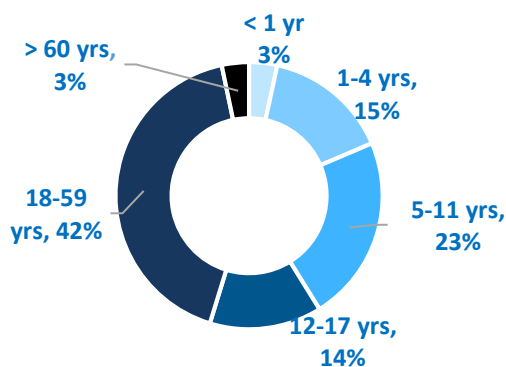
KEY INDICATORS

914,998* (as of 30 September 2019)

*_The number of refugees from Myanmar estimated to be currently residing in Bangladesh in total, including those who fled prior to 2017. Some 744,40 persons have fled Myanmar to Bangladesh since September 2017._

805,673

Registered and issued document under a Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR process that started in June 2018, the process to be finalized soon.
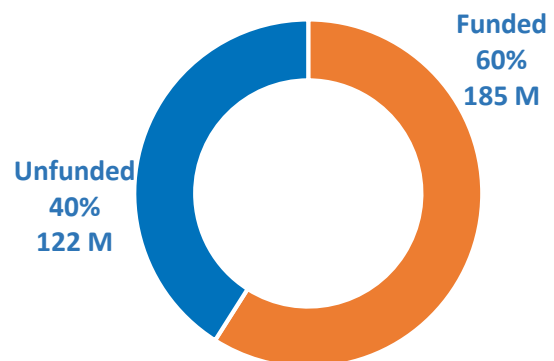
FUNDING (AS OF 30 NOVEMBER 2019)

USD 307.6 M

requested for Bangladesh

Funded 60% 185 M
Unfunded 40% 122 M

AGE BREAKDOWN OF REFUGEES IN COX'S BAZAR

< 1 yr 3%
1-4 yrs, 15%
5-11 yrs, 23%
12-17 yrs, 14%
18-59 yrs, 42%
> 60 yrs, 3%

POPULATION OF CONCERN

Key settlements

Settlement	Population
Kutupalong Sites	734,645
Nayapara sites	68,274
Camp 24 (Leda)	33,540
Camp 22 (Unchiprang)	22,215
Camp 27 (Jadimura)	14,269
Camp 21 (Chakmarkul)	13,172
Camp 23 (Shamlapur)	10,210
Camp 25 (Alikhali)	9,497
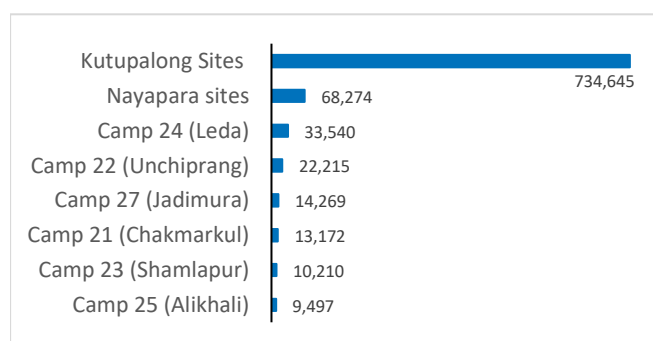
*__Kutupalong Sites__ includes Camp 10, Camp 11, Camp 12, Camp 13, Camp 14, Camp 15, Camp 16, Camp 17, Camp 18, Camp 19, Camp 1E, Camp 1W, Camp 20, Camp 20 Extension, Camp 2E, Camp 2W, Camp 3, Camp 4, Camp 4 Extension, Camp 5, Camp 6, Camp 7, Camp 8E, Camp 8W, Camp 9 Kutupalong RC and **Nayapara sites** includes Camp 26 and Nayapara RC

Operational Context

CYCLONE PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE

Cyclone Bulbul hit Bangladesh and India in early November, with minimal impact on refugee camps

■ A low-pressure system called "Cyclone Bulbul" formed in the Bay of Bengal during the first week of November. The Bangladesh Meteorological Department BMD issued a series of warnings setting in motion activities under the Bangladesh Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP).

■ UNHCR and other humanitarian actors in Cox's Bazar worked closely with the CPP on mobilising resources to potentially respond to cyclone landfall, if any, near Cox's Bazar. Contingency stocks were checked, and Emergency Response Teams (ERTs) were formed. Some 10 ERTs were put on standby consisting of 45 individuals from Protection, WASH, Shelter, and other key technical teams.

■ On 8 November, a cyclone warning flag was raised in the camps by the CPP. One flag is the lowest level warning in a three-flag cyclone warning system. The hoisting of the first flag activated uniform messaging by volunteers with microphones throughout the camps on the potential threat. With the threat lowering, the flag was taken down by 10 November.

■ There was no direct impact from the cyclone on the refugee settlements in Cox's Bazar as they are situated in the southern region of Bangladesh. However, the cyclone resulted in heavier than usual rain in the camps for two days with light damage to infrastructure and shelters from wind. Less than 400 refugees required assistance for repairs or other support for shelters. While the cyclone did not heavily affect the camps, preparations undertaken for Cyclone Bulbul were useful and helped to identify potential weaknesses in the response and some areas were identified that need

Refugee volunteers and CPP mobilised in camps to message about the threat of Cyclone Bulbul. Photo: ©UNHCR/L. Donovan

further synchronization with the national Government-led response and improvements on initial communication both with the authorities and between humanitarian actors.

PROTECTION

More than 805,000 Rohingya registered under the Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR Joint Registration Process

■ More than **805,000** Rohingya refugees from Myanmar were registered in the Joint Registration exercise by the Bangladesh authorities and UNHCR. The ongoing registration aims to collect accurate biometric data, using UNHCR's Biometric Identity Management System (BIMS), and provide each individual with a unique identity document, including family attestations. Currently, it is estimated **over 92% of the refugees previously counted in an exercise with the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner's Officer have been newly verified and registered** through the BIMS system. The entire Rohingya population is expected to be registered by the end of 2019.

HOST COMMUNITY RELATIONS

UNHCR launches cash programme for vulnerable host community families; DHC in attendance

- On 26 November, UNHCR inaugurated a cash support programme for vulnerable Bangladeshi families in Ukhiya and Teknaf sub-districts hosting refugees. UNHCR, with support from our partner World Vision International, will distribute cash to 16,887 local Bangladeshi families.

- This is to complement the Government's existing Social Safety Net Schemes through the Department of Social Services, in the Ukhiya and Teknaf sub-districts, with a focus on the elderly, widowed households and persons with disabilities. The total value of the cash distributions will be more than USD $1.25m.

Deputy High Commissioner Kelly Clements visiting a host community primary school in Nayapara which UNHCR supports. Photo: ©UNHCR/L. Donovan

- UNHCR's Deputy High Commissioner (DHC) Ms. Kelly T. Clements, who was on mission, and Mr. Md Kamal Hossain, the Deputy Commissioner of Cox's Bazar, attended the inauguration event, welcoming the continuous support of UNHCR to the local host communities in Teknaf and Ukhiya.

- The DHC, on her second visit to Bangladesh since the influx of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar after August 2017, hailed the progress made in supporting refugees since their arrival, particularly noting the effort made by the Government of Bangladesh and host communities. She recognized that the responsibility for hosting refugees was challenging for Bangladesh and urged the Government to continue to work with UNHCR and partners in finding solutions.

SHELTER AND NFIS

Pilot to develop targeted assistance for refugees based on their preferences and self-identified needs

- UNHCR kicked off a pilot programme to introduce a more flexible modality of distribution of core relief items (CRIs), such as blankets, a plastic sheeting, jerry cans and mattresses, to refugees in Cox's Bazar. The new distribution modality aims to change the way that UNHCR distributes CRIs and moves away from using fixed CRI sets towards giving refugees a choice of the items or materials which they need and wish to receive.

- A replenishment of CRIs in Camp 21 starting on 20 November used the new system for targeted families, including those who had not received CRIs before, or who received their kits more than a year ago and needed new items and materials. Some 2,826 households out of 3,459 registered households in Camp 21 will be included in the pilot.

- The new system works based on a points system. Each CRI attributed a point value. For example, a kitchen set is valued as 1,800 points and a mosquito net as 250 points. Family size determines the amount of points allocated to each family. Eligible families in Camp 21 were informed of the points they have and invited to visit Bangladesh Red Crescent Society distribution point to exchange their points for a selection of their preferred items. If refugees decide not to spend the whole allowance at once, they can visit the distribution point several times until the end of January 2020. This will help reduce the burden on refugees carrying heavy kits home and allow them to address newly arising needs.

- The pilot is linked to UNHCR's newly introduced Global Distribution Tool (GDT). The GDT system uses up-to-date family data from the joint registration exercise by the Government of Bangladesh and UNHCR. Bar codes on registration smart cards ensure easy identification of the targeted families when they visit distribution sites. The use of GDT and smart cards makes electronic tracking easy and enables collection of assistance faster and more efficient for everyone involved.

- The new approach to CRI distribution aims to ensure greater relevance of support and assistance for each family. Based on refugees' preferences, UNHCR will be able to analyze trends and interests in items before expanding the distribution to other camps, which will help inform future procurements for greater efficiency. UNHCR is planning to expand the new system in 2020 to other types of assistance which are currently provided in-kind as separate items or kits, including solar fans, bedsheets, umbrellas, ropes, and hygiene and sanitation items from WASH kits.

SITE MANAGEMENT

Conservation at work in the camps to protect important streams and ecosystems

- UNHCR and its partner, the Center for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS), are working together to conserve environmentally degraded areas of the *Modhu Chara* stream inside Kutupalong refugee settlement. The *Modhu Chara* is a 7.8 kilometre-long hill stream that is an important local natural resource. It plays a role in ensuring water and food security for refugees and host communities, supporting their livelihoods and sustaining biodiversity. The stream was affected with debris during the refugee influx in 2017. UNHCR and CNRS are working quickly to restore the stream and prevent any irreversible damage that would affect the people who rely on it.

- The initial work includes a package of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) to restore one of the *Modhu Chara's* tributaries, the *Kalam Chara*. Work so far has included rehabilitating the degraded *chara* by deepening and widening its banks; building water reservoirs, facilitating groundwater recharging; piloting bio-mechanical (green and grey) wastewater treatment plants; instituting riparian and block plantation with vetiver/grass hedging using local species; sensitizing communities in proximity to the *chara* on solid waste management; demonstrating conservation agriculture practices to refugees; and community engagement on the management of the stream both within and outside the camps.

- UNHCR-CNRS are planning to scale up NbS approaches for other locations in the area going forward, and thereby help to improve the environment both for refugees and host communities. This is expected to be an important pioneering work towards facilitating green development in a humanitarian setting.

Working in partnership

UNHCR co-chairs a Strategic Executive Group (SEG) in Bangladesh with the UN Resident Coordinator and IOM. The Refugee Agency leads on the protection response for all refugees, and heads a Protection Working Group in Cox's Bazar. UNHCR welcomes its valuable partnership with a number of UN agencies and coordinates the delivery of its assistance with humanitarian partners through a number of working groups under the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG). UNHCR's main government counterpart is the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief and its Cox's Bazar-based Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC). UNHCR staff work closely with the Camp-in-Charge officials in different refugee settlements, as well as a range of international and national actors. It has a strong network of 33 partners:
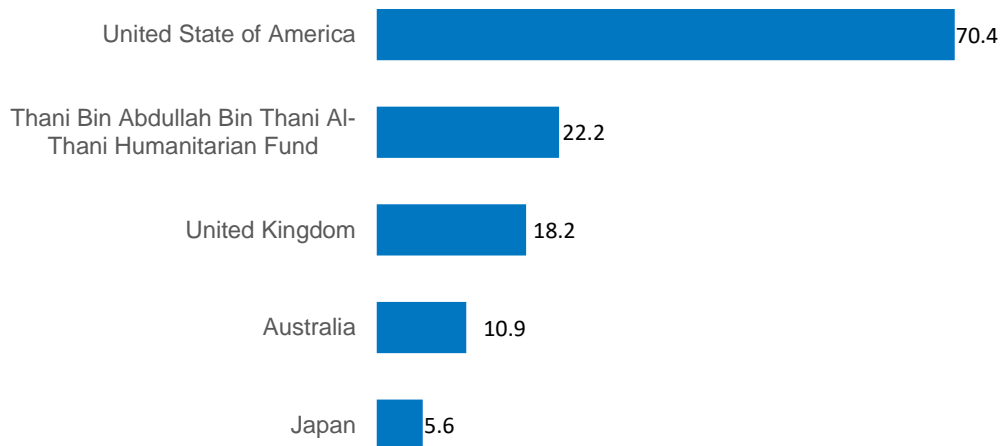
MDMR (Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief) | Action Aid Bangladesh | ACF (Action Contre la Faim) | BNWLA (Bangladesh National Woman Lawyer's Association) | Bangladesh Red Crescent Society | BRAC (Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee) | Caritas Bangladesh | Center for Natural Resource Studies | CODEC (Community Development Centre) | COAST (Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust) | Danish Refugee Council | FH Association (Food for the Hungry) | GK (Gonoshasthaya Kendra) | IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) | Handicap International | Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation | Light House | Oxfam GB | Relief International | Mukti Cox's Bazar | NGO Forum for Public Health | RTMI (Research, Training and Management International) | Save the Children International | World Vision | Solidarites International | Terre des Hommes | TAI (Technical Assistance Incorporated) | NRC (Norwegian Refugee Council) | WFP (World Food Programme) | UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) | IOM (International Organization for Migration) | BLAST (Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust) | Rights Jessore

UNHCR would also like to acknowledge the crucial role played by the refugees in the response; with over 3,000 volunteers from the refugee community who are often the first responders on the ground.

Financial Information

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some US$ 185 million. UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds.

Top 5 funding sources (2019)

Funding source	Amount
United State of America	70.4
Thani Bin Abdullah Bin Thani Al-Thani Humanitarian Fund	22.2
United Kingdom	18.2
Australia	10.9
Japan	5.6

UNHCR's humanitarian response in Bangladesh is made possible thanks to the generous support of major donors who have contributed unrestricted funding to UNHCR's global operations, and to donors who have generously contributed directly to UNHCR Bangladesh operations.

In 2018 and 2019, support has been received from the people and governments of:

Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, the European Union, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

UNHCR is sincerely grateful for the additional support received from many individuals, foundations, and companies worldwide including Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Education Cannot Wait, Kuwait Finance House, Qatar Charity, and Thani Bin Abdullah Bin Thani Al Thani Humanitarian Fund.

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LINKS
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